

In FIG15 the player makes another wager to start a new game. Again, an initial hand is dealt, and the same pre-selected bonus hand is displayed, indicating which cards are already qualified. The five of clubs is indicated as a matching bonus item in addition to the pre-qualified items. The player decides which cards to hold. In this case, a pair of fours is held in an attempt to achieve a winning combination from the standard pay table. Additionally, the five of clubs is held because it matches a card in the bonus hand and has not already been qualified.

In FIG16 the player discards and receives the replacement cards and the final hand is evaluated. There is no winning combination from the standard poker pay table, and since the bonus pay table used requires at least two cards in the final hand to match the bonus cards, no bonus is awarded. It is important to note that only the current final hand is used for bonus evaluation when compared against the bonus pay table. A third card, the five of clubs was qualified. The player now only needs to qualify the king of spades and the two of diamonds to receive the bonus award from the bank.

The player makes another wager to start a new game. Again, an initial hand is dealt, and the same pre-selected bonus hand is displayed, indicating which cards are already qualified. The player decides which cards to hold. In this case, the player held the king of clubs in an attempt to achieve a winning combination from the standard poker pay table. Replacement cards were dealt and the final hand as shown in FIG17 was evaluated. One of the replacement cards, the two of diamonds, matched one of the bonus cards. The resulting hand had a "Jacks or Better" winning combination from the winning pay table. Only one card in the final hand matched a card in the bonus hand. This is not a win from the bonus pay table used for this example. However, an additional card was qualified. Now, there is only one card remaining to be qualified.

The player makes another wager to start a new game. Again, an initial hand is dealt, and the same pre-selected bonus hand is displayed, indicating which cards are already qualified. The player decides which cards to hold. In this case, the player held the pair of eights. Replacement cards were dealt and the final hand as shown in FIG18 was evaluated. There is no win from the standard poker pay table or the bonus pay table, however the remaining bonus item was qualified. This results in the contents of the bank being awarded to the player and concludes the current bonus cycle.

In FIG19, the player makes another wager to start a new game. Again, an initial hand is dealt. Since the player just completed the previous bonus cycle, a new bonus cycle begins, and a new bonus hand is displayed.

## **CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method of playing a video poker game including the following:

- a) providing a pay schedule to a player used to award winnings;
- b) allowing the player to make a wager to participate in the play of the game;
- c) displaying an initial hand of random cards to a player;
- d) allowing the player to discard any unwanted cards, if any, and dealing replacement cards for the discarded cards so that a final hand is established;
- e) determining whether the final hand is a winning or losing hand;
- f) paying the player a pre-established amount based on the amount of the wager and the pay schedule if the final hand is a winning hand.

2. The method of claim 1 including the steps of:

- a) providing a bonus pay schedule to the player used to award bonus winnings.
- b) displaying random bonus items to the player when the initial hand is displayed;
- c) comparing the final hand to the bonus items and determining if any bonus is awarded.
- d) paying the player a pre-established amount based on the amount of the wager and the bonus pay schedule.

3. A method of defining a bonus cycle including the steps of:

- a) defining the start of a bonus cycle when the first wager is made and no bonus cycle is currently active.
- b) selecting a set of random bonus items at the beginning of the bonus cycle;
- c) displaying these bonus items to all players participating in the bonus cycle;
- d) determining if any player has satisfied the conditions to end the bonus cycle.
- e) if conditions have been met, ending the bonus cycle.

4. The methods of claim 1 and claim 3 including the steps of:

- a) providing a bonus pay schedule used to award bonus winnings to each player.
- b) providing a bank to which bonus winnings are paid and from which bonus winnings are awarded.
- c) displaying the bonus items for the current bonus cycle to each player when each player's initial hand is displayed;
- d) comparing each player's final hand to the bonus items and determining if any bonus is awarded.
- e) comparing the final hand of each player to the bonus items and qualifying the bonus items for each player that match cards in that player's final hand.
- f) paying the player a percentage of the pre-established amount based on the amount of the wager and the bonus pay schedule.
- g) paying the bank the remaining amount of the award from claim 4f.
- h) determining if any player has qualified all bonus items, paying a bonus from the bank, and ending the bonus cycle.